

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, California 95814



November 21, 2002

REFUGEE COORDINATOR LETTER NO. 02-27

TO: County Refugee Coordinators
Forum Chairpersons
Mutual Assistance Associations
Providers of Services to Torture Survivors and Trafficking Victims
Voluntary Agencies

SUBJECT: COLLABORATION

The State Advisory Council (SAC) is a body that advises the California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) Refugee Programs Branch (RPB) on refugee policy as it relates to services and assistance. The SAC recently developed and adopted a Strategic Plan that outlines its goals and objectives. The plan is attached for your information. One of the SAC's goals is to maintain California's refugee resettlement infrastructure in order to meet the basic needs for service delivery within the impacted counties/regions. Strategies to accomplish this goal include encouraging collaboration and coordination amongst refugee service providers, encouraging regional and innovative approaches to service delivery and encouraging refugee service providers to diversify.

The RPB would like to foster and encourage the collaboration and coordination amongst refugee services providers. This can be accomplished through identifying and working with partners. Partnerships enhance the likelihood that your program will be successful. By developing and cultivating partnerships, you extend the reach, impact, and credibility of your programs and messages. Your partners can come from various arenas, such as business, media, private sector, and community-based organizations, and include various segments of the population such as youth or elders.

Partnerships can also provide new regional/innovative approaches to your service delivery. Through the identification of best practices and models, they will allow for the bridge-building between cultures. It is not only important to determine and understand the specific needs of individual communities and cultures, but also to work within the broader society with its many diverse groups.

The RPB encourages refugee service providers to diversify target groups for whom services are provided. Working with seasoned multi-cultural providers in your community will enrich your programs and will enhance activities in your community. Communities in which refugee providers have established close positive ties with a range of agencies have derived a wide array of benefits. Refugees gain greater

access to available services such as social services, employment services, health and mental health services, youth programs, victim assistance programs, parenting classes, medical assistance programs, business networking, and neighborhood groups.

The results of these collaborated efforts provide refugees with additional experiences and tools to succeed in the United States and help them to integrate more easily into the social, academic, business, legal, and religious life of California.

The RPB wishes your agencies' programs continued success and together we will strive to provide a model refugee program for the State of California.

Sincerely,
Original Signed by Thuan Nguyen
On November 21, 2002

THUAN NGUYEN, Chief
Refugee Programs Branch

Attachment

**State Advisory Committee
Approved Strategic Plan
April 24, 2002**

GOAL: Minimize the impact of budget reductions on service delivery to refugees

WHEN	WHO	WHAT
December 31, 2002	CDSS	<p>Seek to implement process to document the number of asylees/victims of trafficking/parolees in California to present to ORR to justify and secure funding necessary to serve these populations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact INS to obtain information pertaining to these groups residing in California. • Review all current data collected by CDSS and others (e.g. CDHS data) to determine if data collected is adequate to support funding and policy decisions.
Ongoing	CDSS	<p>Encourage refugee service providers to access mainstream public services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform refugee service providers of the availability of and how to access mainstream services. • Inform refugee community about how to access other funding sources. • Obtain commitment from County Coordinators and refugee service providers to provide information and discuss mechanism to collect necessary information to support state funding.
Ongoing	CDSS	<p>Diversify types of funding sources to support refugee service providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer grant writing training (At CDSS conference, etc.) • Invite funding sources to share information on how to obtain funding at annual conference (e.g. foundations, service providers, etc.) • Disseminate information on funding opportunities to refugee service providers. (e.g. Develop Resource directory, funding alerts, Foundation Center information, nonprofit resource center information, etc.)

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GOAL: Maintain California's refugee resettlement infrastructure in order to meet the basic needs for service delivery within the impacted counties/regions

WHEN	WHO	WHAT
Ongoing	CDSS	Encourage collaboration and coordination amongst refugee service providers
Ongoing	CDSS	Encourage regional/innovative approaches to service delivery.
Ongoing	CDSS	Encourage refugee service providers to diversify target groups.
Ongoing	SAC	Convene meetings with SAC members, VOLAGs, MAAs and other refugee services providers (e.g., at the CDSS Information Exchange Conference) to initiate a discussion and develop a plan of commitment and action to maintain California's infrastructure to meet the basic needs of refugees.
Ongoing	CDSS, SAC	Identify strategies to build and enhance capacity of MAAs to serve refugees

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GOAL: Increase visibility of California's refugee program's to advocate for meeting unmet needs

WHEN	WHO	WHAT
Annually	CDSS, SAC	Identify issues and unmet needs in California's refugee resettlement program through a gap analysis that includes input from all agencies involved in refugee resettlement.
Ongoing	CDSS, SAC	<p>At national, state and county level, communicate the accomplishments of California's refugee program. Accomplishments should reflect contributions from refugee communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support Refugee Awareness Day activities in impacted communities throughout California. • Convene state Refugee Awareness Day celebration in Sacramento. <p>Showcase best practices/model refugee programs at national, state and local conferences and meetings.</p> <p>Disseminate information on best practices/model refugee programs (e.g. produce best practices document, put information on CDSS WebPages, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage local refugee groups to sponsor honoring events and other types of local activities to garner local support and funding for refugee programs from key community and business leaders and politicians.
Ongoing	CDSS, SAC	Encourage local refugee organizations to empower refugees to advocate for their own needs and become active in grassroots activities in support of their own needs.

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GOAL: Outreach to provide services to refugees, parolees, asylees and victims of trafficking.

WHEN	WHO	WHAT
December 31, 2003	CDSS	Work with INS and the court system to establish a system to inform asylees of their eligibility for services.
Ongoing	CDSS, SAC	Develop a plan to identify and disseminate methods for outreach to new groups and providers.

GOAL: Inform providers about groups (new and continuing) who are eligible for services.

WHEN	WHO	WHAT
Ongoing	CDSS	Encourage state and local forums to develop approaches to serve new groups.
Ongoing	CDSS, SAC	Inform and encourage state departments/programs which fund services with the potential to benefit refugees and new groups (asylees, victims of trafficking) to make services available to them.
Ongoing	CDSS	Maintain and disseminate a directory of Refugee Service Agencies in California.